

AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION:

Please amend the Application as follows.

IN THE SPECIFICATION:

Please replace the paragraph at page 2, lines 22-25 of the specification with the following:

The invention accordingly provides silicon nitride materials containing sintering aids and SiO₂ and having a molar ratio of the silicon dioxide in the grain boundary phase to the sintering aids including SiO₂ in the grain boundary phase is >60%, preferably >65%, and the oxide nitride content ~~(SiO₂N₂O)~~ ~~(Si₂N₂O)~~ is <1%.